



THE FREEDOM  
OF INFORMATION  
FOUNDATION  
OF TEXAS

February 8, 2005

FOIFT Board of Directors

*Via Email*

Ms. Katherine Garner  
Executive Director


Re: *Proposed FOIA Legislation*

Dear Board Members:

United States Senator John Cornyn will introduce legislation to strengthen the Freedom of Information Act next week. Among other things, the Open Government Act of 2005 would provide meaningful deadlines for federal agencies to act on Freedom of Information requests and impose consequences on federal agencies for missing statutory deadlines. In light of the fact that some federal agencies have had requests for information pending for as long as seventeen years, the Foundation believes Senator Cornyn's proposals are much needed and overdue. The proposed legislation would also make it easier for successful litigants to recover their attorney's fees when litigation becomes necessary, strengthen reporting requirements on government agencies' FOIA compliance, establish an ombudsman to resolve FOIA complaints without the need to resort to litigation and enhance the authority of the Office of Special Counsel to take disciplinary action against government officials who arbitrarily and capriciously deny disclosure.

The Foundation therefore enthusiastically endorses Senator Cornyn's proposed legislation and encourages each of your organizations to do the same.

Sincerely,



Joel R. White

JRW:slg

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cc: Mr. James Ho  
Chief Counsel of U.S. Senator John Cornyn, Chairman  
U.S. Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution,  
Civil Rights and Property Rights  
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 139  
Washington, DC 20510  
*Via Email: james.ho@judiciary-rep.senate.gov*